By letter of 30 June 1997, the ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies sent an announcement to all National Societies whereby the Red Cross Society of China informed that the Hong Kong Red Cross will transfer its affiliation from the British Red Cross to the Red Cross Society of China. The accepted short title will be the "Hong Kong Red Cross (Branch of the Red Cross Society of China)".

Announcement by the Red Cross Society of China

The Hong Kong Red Cross will become a special local branch with high autonomy of the Red Cross Society of China from 1 July 1997.

At the fourth session of the Sixth National Board of the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC), which was held in Xiamen, Fujian Province from 1st to 4th April 1997, the RCSC National Board considered the application by the Hong Kong Red Cross (HKRC) to become a branch of the RCSC from 1 July 1997.

As the Government of the People's Republic of China shall resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong from 1 July 1997 with the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and that the British Red Cross Society (BRCS) had accepted HKRC's notification to terminate its affiliation with the BRCS with effect from 1 July 1997, the RCSC National Board passed a resolution at the above-mentioned session to accept the HKRC to be a branch of the RCSC with a high degree of autonomy. The affiliation will come into effect on 1 July 1997.

The legal basis regulating the future relationship between the RCSC and HKRC shall be the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the Constitution of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. As from 1 July 1997, the full official name of the Hong Kong Red Cross shall be "The Red Cross of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

of the People's Republic of China". The accepted short title shall be the "Hong Kong Red Cross (Branch of the Red Cross Society of China)": The HKRC shall use the emblem of the RCSC. The National Headquarters in Beijing shall continue to represent the RCSC in international organizations or meetings where statutory participation is confined to National Societies. However, whenever appropriate, HKRC representatives would be invited to serve as members of the RCSC delegations.

As a RCSC branch with a high degree of autonomy, the HKRC will have full autonomy, subject to the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of Chana and other laws enacted by the legislature of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, to formulate or revise its regulations and rules, and to make its owndecisions on matters concerning its internal management, which include organizational structure, policies and administrative decision making, working procedures, personnel, financial management, nature and forms of service operations. The Red Cross Law of the People's Republic of China and the RCSC Constitution shall not apply to Hong Kong or to the HKRC. The Hong Kong Red Cross (Branch of the Red Cross Society of China) shall be able to maintain and develop direct contact and operational programmes with other members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, provided such contact and programmes do not contravene the Movement's Fundamental Principle of "Unity" and that the RCSC National Headquarters be duly informed.

Beijing, 15 April 1997